

CITY OF FITCHBURG CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2016

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Koutonen, Dennis DeGara, Mike Donnelly, Harry Karis, Tracy Sarefield, Tom Starr, David Streb (7)

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Smith, Mike O'Hara

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, Fitchburg Fire Headquarters, 33 North St. & later relocated to Community Room, lower level

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Request for Determination of Applicability - City of Fitchburg, park improvements, First & Railroad Streets
Gene Bollinger, Weston & Sampson, Amy LeBlanc & Larry Casassa, Community Development present.
Gene presented plan to renovate playground, install new basketball court, rain garden, landscaping, etc.
Will be a 92% reduction in impervious surface.
Plantings will be low maintenance. Grass won't grow very high.
Amy: A nonprofit community group in area will help out with maintenance.

Q: CB at corner of First & R/R is clogged, needs cleaning. They will do.

Q: Rain garden will be a receptor of stormwater. Why not install at lowest grade, then? Why not flip basketball court and rain garden?

Gene: Because concern for residential abutters to south & east, don't want active playground right next to them. They're renovating basketball court where it has been.

Mike D wants to see maintenance plan for the park.

Larry: Issue was raised at City Council when grant was accepted. DPW Commissioner has committed to maintaining this park.

Commission is concerned about plan for maintenance of all parks.

Larry will get schedule from DPW concerning maintenance.

Q: Will there be lights? No, Parks Board has policy of this being a dawn to dusk park. Don't want to disturb neighborhood.

Motion made (Dave) to issue a Negative Determination of Applicability. No second.

Motion made (Mike D) & seconded (Harry) to issue Positive Determination of Applicability.

Vote 6-1 in favor.

A Notice of Intent will be submitted for the next meeting.

Meeting relocated to Community Room on Lower Level.

Request for Determination of Applicability - Mass DOT, intersection improvements South & Electric
Mike Myers, TEC Assocs. presented plan. Planned intersection improvements will be funded thru "Safe Routes to School" program by Mass DOT. Improvements are within buffer zone of wetland leading from culvert at NE side of intersection, near Old South St. Project involves rebuilding sidewalk in grass area. Project will now also include new sidewalk on south side of Electric Ave. from intersection up to Cogshall Park.

Motion made & seconded to issue Negative Determination of Applicability. Vote unanimous in favor.

Notice of Intent - Edgewater Homes, Inc., 0 Rindge Rd. (near McKay School) - sewer connection in Riverfront Area (continued from March 29)

Paul Grasewicz had submitted plan revised 4/25/16 the day before. This showed a 10-12 foot high retaining wall. A footing drain & roof drain to a drywell was added. Proposed house in same location. Paul: Est. 1,800 cu. yds. material to be removed. Disturbed area has been decreased to 6,000 sq. ft. Amt. of stormwater leaving site has been reduced. He submitted a letter responding to Tim's review letter point by point. Also wetlands report from Beaver Tracks, LLC (John Sisson) was submitted and soils report.

Tim: When FSU expanded McKay School parking lot several years ago, their wetland delineation was different. Paul's "Septic system not feasible" opinion needs to be supported by fact.

Paul will research. If Commission prefers septic he could withdraw application and install septic w/ large amount of disturbance outside of Riverfront Area.

Agreed to continue to next meeting to let Commission review submitted materials.

Request for Determination of Applicability - Pan Am Railways ROW, vegetation management (continued from March 29)

Applicant's representative Keith Morris has conflict w/ meeting on Tues. nights. Resolved to meet w/ Tim, etc. another time & report back to Commission.

Notice of Intent - Gionet, 579 South St - mixed use development in buffer zone (continued from March 29)

Hearing opened. ConCom site visit 4/16 recapped.

Bill Hannigan: No changes to plan. Requested waiver of the 20-foot "no disturb" area in the local wetlands regs.

Motion made & seconded to issue OOC. Vote unanimous in favor.

Notice of Intent - Fitchburg Galaxy, LLC, 133 Water St. (former Pelletier's Bldg. Supply), redevelopment in Floodplain & Riverfront (continued from March 29)

Pat Doherty, P.E. present. Site visit 4/9/16 recapped. Plan has not changed. Snow dumping in river will be prohibited. Pat has discussed removal of sandbar in river w/ site contractor. It would be too difficult to reach from the height of the Pelletier's site.

Mike D. – This is Riverfront property. Chain link fence at rear of site is turning our backs on the asset that is the river. He suggested removing part of fence & removing portion of stone wall to step down to the river. But this would need approval of Army Corps of Engineers.

Discussion of proposed landscaping at rear of property and along street frontage.

Public Comment: None.

Motion made & seconded to issue OOC. Vote unanimous in favor.

Notice of Intent - Krikorian, mixed use redevelopment, 10 Main St. (former Harper Furniture), 1-10 Summer & 15 Summer St. - Floodplain

Jamie Rheault, Whitman & Bingham presented plan for redevelopment of three parcels into 66 apartments and one commercial tenant on First floor. Site is entirely developed with building and parking lot.

Building is in 100-year floodplain, lowest level of building is approx. ½ foot below Base Flood Elevation at max. point. Hydrologic studies show that the statistical floodplain is actually six feet lower than that shown in the Flood Insurance Rate Map.

Stormwater doesn't change, all impervious area before & after.

Motion made & seconded to issue Negative Determination of Applicability. Vote 6-0 in favor.

Amended OOC - Damon Rd., Lot 1, Martineau - house & septic

Bill Hannigan presented plan revised 4/25/2016. Proposed buyer of Lots 1 & 2 wants to change house location & lot grading from that shown on Pappas' approved plan. Grading in area is slightly different than on approved plan. Buyer building house on Lot 1. Lot 2 stays vacant for now, all of its proposed disturbed area will be outside of the buffer.

Public comment:

John Carbone, 33 Damon Rd. - How sewerage? Force main out the back of Lots 1-9.

Atty. John Bowen: The previous plan showed the disturbed area on Lots 1 & 2 outside of the buffer, now more disturbance in buffer and closer to his client (Thomas). What will be the cumulative impact of the 9 lots? Will this be a large change? How will increased disturbance affect his client's septic?

Bill H: Her house is upgradient of wetland disturbance.

Q: Is this a Rare Species area? No.

New owner 20 Damon Rd: Was concerned w/ short notice of hearing. Can he also tie in to this force main? Bill H: Would be too long a run.

John Carbone, 33 Damon Rd. is concerned w/ drainage onto his property.

Bill H: Wetlands area flows away from 33 Damon Rd.

Motion made & seconded to approve Amended OOC for Lot 1 only. Vote unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Violation - Crawford St. - Repo vehicle storage

Mike will contact Sebastian on status, he was in process of removing vehicles from site.

He is moving "North East Roads" business to former co-op site, 34 Kimball Place, which he recently purchased.

Crocker Field concession stand

Steve Svolis in to ask permission to rebuild after fire destroyed the structure last year. In 1991 he designed original one and went before the Commission. Will be rebuilt on same footprint. Is located in the 100-year floodplain. Commission agreed that they had no objection to rebuilding the concession stand.

Proposed removal of tree at Riverfront Park

Trevor Bonilla, Beers for Good explained proposal to trim /remove one tree because it interferes w/ setting up tent for Civic Days events at Riverfront Park. Parks Board has given their approval, as long as the tree is replaced. They are willing to provide a replacement tree.

Commission objected to removing tree for just one event. Could tree be moved? Yes at high cost.

Commission suggested payment per their Tree Replacement Policy.

Cont'd discussion next meeting.

Mike D. read letter concerning restoration work at Forest Hill Cemetery last year and requested that Commission send a letter to DPW reminding them of deadline. Commission agreed.

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote unanimous.

Meeting adjourned: 8:25 p.m.

Next meeting: 5/31/2016